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AUTHOR Worthington, Robert M.
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ABSTRACT

In this keynote address, the Assistant Secretary for Vocational and Adult Education described federal efforts to foster partnerships in support of rural education. According to the 1980 Census, the country's rural non-farm population grew 11.1% between 1970 and 1980 but rural communities lagged behind the rest of the country in educational achievement and economic well-being. Because rural areas have fewer resources with which to buy more expensive services, educational partnerships between the private and public sectors are essential to quality rural education. The proceedings of the National Partnerships in Education Program, held October 13, 1983, outlined how such partnerships can work, noting that they can help schools get assistance with special resource needs; supplement classroom learning; understand the business world, its resources, its requirements, and its concerns; and gain expertise in technical and management areas. The private sector and community organizations can also provide rural schools with tutoring, apprenticeships, speakers, equipment, scholarships, and motivation. The Department of Education intends to further partnerships in rural education through its Intra-Agency Committee on Rural Education and through the Rural Education Subcommittee of the Federal Interagency Committee on Education. The Department has issued a national rural education policy statement, prepared annual comprehensive rural education reports, reviewed legislation and regulations for rural education equity, and planned a conference on rural education partnerships for June 1984. (SB)

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BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS IN RURAL EDUCATION

BY

DR. ROBERT M. WORTHINGTON
ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR
VOCATIONAL AND ADULT EDUCATION

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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KEYNOTE ADDRESS BEFORE THE
SEVENTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE
PEOPLE UNITED FOR RURAL EDUCATION

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BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS IN RURAL EDUCATION

IT IS WITH PARTICULAR PRIDE AND PLEASURE THAT I ADDRESS YOU TODAY AS KEYNOTE SPEAKER AT THIS THE 7TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF PEOPLE UNITED FOR RURAL EDUCATION, ONE OF THE MOST EFFECTIVE RURAL EDUCATION ADVOCACY ORGANIZATIONS IN EXISTENCE. LAST YEAR, DR. DUANE NIELSEN, OF MY STAFF, SPOKE AT YOUR 6TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE. HE STATED OUR CONVICTION THAT YOUR ORGANIZATION AND ITS MEMBERS ARE PLAYING AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN EFFORTS TO IMPROVE THE DELIVERY OF EDUCATIONAL SERVICES IN RURAL COMMUNITIES. WE SHARE YOUR VIEW THAT EDUCATION IS PRIMARILY A STATE AND LOCAL RESPONSIBILITY AND THAT THE PROPER ROLE OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT IS TO PARTICIPATE IN PARTNERSHIPS DEVELOPED ON THE STATE AND LOCAL LEVELS BETWEEN SCHOOL BOARDS, ADMINISTRATORS, PARENTS, TEACHERS, STUDENTS, COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS AND THE PRIVATE SECTOR THAT ARE DESIGNED TO PROMOTE EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE. WE SINCERELY APPRECIATE YOUR EFFECTIVENESS IN PROVIDING LEADERSHIP TO AND IN REPRESENTING THE VIEWS OF PARENTS AND OTHERS IN RURAL AMERICA RELATING TO RURAL EDUCATION, ITS SCHOOLS, ITS TEACHERS, ITS ADMINISTRATORS, AND ITS STATE AND REGIONAL AGENCIES. THE LEADERSHIP AND SUPPORT OF ORGANIZATIONS AND THEIR MEMBERS, SUCH AS, PURE, HAVE BEEN CRITICAL TO THE SUCCESS THAT WE HAVE ACHIEVED IN PROMOTING THE INTERESTS OF RURAL EDUCATION OVER THE YEARS, INCLUDING THE DEVELOPMENT AND ISSUANCE OF A NATIONAL RURAL EDUCATION POLICY STATEMENT BY THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION. THAT LEADERSHIP AND SUPPORT MUST CONTINUE IF WE ARE TO ACHIEVE EVEN GREATER SUCCESS IN THE FUTURE.

I BRING YOU THE WARM GREETINGS AND BEST WISHES OF SECRETARY BELL. I JOIN HIM IN CONGRATULATING YOU ON THE EXCELLENT WORK THAT YOUR ORGANIZATION IS DOING IN RURAL AMERICA. YOU ARE PROVING TO BE AN ENDURING VOICE FOR RURAL EDUCATION IN THE CONTINUING NATIONAL DEBATE ON WHICH EDUCATION POLICIES SHOULD THIS COUNTRY ADOPT IN THE PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION. WE ARE PLEASED WITH THE COOPERATIVE WORKING RELATIONSHIP, THE PARTNERSHIP, THAT HAS DEVELOPED BETWEEN PURE AND THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION. AS MANY OF YOU KNOW, ON BEHALF OF SECRETARY BELL, I ANNOUNCED LAST OCTOBER 17 THE ISSUANCE OF A DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION RURAL EDUCATION POLICY STATEMENT. THE ANNOUNCEMENT WAS MADE AT THE 75TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE RURAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION WHICH WAS HELD IN MANHATTAN, KANSAS. A COHERENT ARTICULATION OF NATIONAL POLICY ON RURAL EDUCATION BY THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN LONG OVERDUE AND IS AN ACTION THAT RURAL EDUCATORS AND OTHERS COMMITTED TO IMPROVING EDUCATION IN RURAL COMMUNITIES HAVE LONG ADVOCATED. WE ARE PROUD THAT WE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE DEVELOPMENT AND ISSUANCE OF THE POLICY STATEMENT. INDICATIVE OF THE DEDICATION THAT EXISTS IN RURAL AMERICA TO EDUCATION AND THE SERIOUSNESS OF THE COMMITMENT TO IT THAT THOSE PRESENT HAD, THE ANNOUNCEMENT WAS GREETED WITH A STANDING OVATION.

ISSUANCE OF THE POLICY STATEMENT IS ONLY ONE STEP, THOUGH AN IMPORTANT ONE FOR SURE, IN EFFORTS AT THE FEDERAL LEVEL TO FOSTER PARTNERSHIPS IN RURAL EDUCATION AS A MEANS TO PROMOTE THE INCREASE IN QUANTITY AND QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN RURAL AREAS. AS YOU KNOW, PRESIDENT REAGAN ON LAST OCTOBER 3RD SIGNED A PROCLAMATION DECLARING A "NATIONAL YEAR OF PARTNERSHIPS IN EDUCATION." IN THE PROCLAMATION, THE PRESIDENT STATED THAT, (AND I QUOTE) "AMERICA'S FUTURE IS DEPENDENT UPON THE HEALTH AND VITALITY OF HER EDUCATION SYSTEM." HE GOES ON TO ADD THAT THOUGH MANY INDIVIDUALS HAVE WORKED DILIGENTLY IN SUPPORT OF EDUCATION, THERE IS MORE WORK TO BE DONE. MORE PEOPLE MUST BECOME INVOLVED. SPECIFICALLY, PARTNERSHIPS IN EDUCATION MUST BEGIN TO INCLUDE THE PRIVATE SECTOR AS WELL AS THE PUBLIC SECTOR IF WE ARE TO BROADEN THE RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO EDUCATION. AS ACKNOWLEDGED IN THE PROCLAMATION, MANY SCHOOLS HAVE ALREADY DEVELOPED PARTNERSHIPS WITH THE PRIVATE SECTOR. ISSUANCE OF THE PROCLAMATION ALLOWS US TO TAKE NOTE OF THIS FACT AND MORE IMPORTANTLY, TO ENCOURAGE THE CREATION OF MORE OF THESE PARTNERSHIPS ALL ACROSS THIS COUNTRY - NEEDLESS TO SAY THAT INCLUDES RURAL AMERICA, WHICH IS HOME FOR A SIGNIFICANT NUMBER OF AMERICANS - 59.5 MILLION MEN, WOMEN AND CHILDREN.

AS DEFINED IN THE 1980 CENSUS, THE RURAL POPULATION COMPRISES ALL PERSONS LIVING OUTSIDE URBANIZED AREAS IN THE OPEN COUNTRY OR IN COMMUNITIES WITH LESS THAT 2,500 INHABITANTS. IT ALSO INCLUDES THOSE LIVING IN AREAS OF EXTENDED CITIES WITH A POPULATION DENSITY OF LESS THAN 1,000 INHABITANTS PER SQUARE MILE.

Other information generated about the rural population by the 1980 Census include the following: We have experienced the largest growth in our rural population in any decade in one hundred years. The rural population increased from 53.6 million in 1970 to 59.5 million in 1980 - a growth rate of 11.1%. More significantly, all of this growth in rural areas was due to growth in its nonfarm population. The farm population actually declined during the past decade. Thusly, though always diverse in terms of types of communities, rural America is now beginning to experience greater diversity within its various communities. This has major implications for the education and rural development strategies that we are considering for the 1980's. One of these implications is that there is now more than ever a need to build <u>PARTNERSHIPS</u> in these communities to improve the quality of life for all members of these communities, old-timer and newcomer alike.

In spite of these significant trends in the changing demographics of rural America, rural communities continue to lag behind the rest of America in educational achievement and economic well-being. While the poverty rate rose from 10.7 to 11.9 in metro areas, it rose from <u>13.4</u> to <u>15.4</u> in rural areas. In the area of education, rural schools (67% of all schools) and rural students (33% of all students) experience distinct educational problems and exist in unique subcultures. Rural schools characteristically have higher attrition rates and lower achievement levels than their urban counterparts. Although rural areas are rapidly growing in

POPULATION, THEIR TAX BASES ARE NOT. EVEN THOUGH RURAL SCHOOLS COMMIT A LARGER PERCENTAGE OF THEIR RESOURCES TO EDUCATION, THESE RESOURCES ARE ABLE TO DELIVER LESS SERVICE BECAUSE RURAL SERVICES COST MORE THAN COMPARABLE SERVICES IN URBAN AREAS DUE TO EXPENSIVE TRANSPORTATION REQUIREMENTS IN REMOTE, SPARSELY POPULATED AREAS, SCARCITY OF PROFESSIONAL RESOURCES, AND A WHOLE HOST OF OTHER FACTORS. THESE ARE FACTS OF RURAL LIFE. RURAL DEVELOPMENT IS INHIBITED BY LIMITED SUPPORT SERVICES, LIMITED LEVELS OF AVAILABLE PROFESSIONAL EXPERTISE AND LIMITED ROLE MODELS AND EXPOSURES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE. IN SHORT, RURAL AMERICA HAS FEWER RESOURCES THAN MANY OF ITS COUNTERPARTS TO BUY SERVICES THAT COST IT MORE. IT IS ESSENTIAL, THEREFORE, THAT WE FORGE NEW PARTNERSHIPS IN EDUCATION THAT INCLUDE THE PRIVATE SECTOR TO BROADEN AVAILABLE RESOURCES AS THE PRESIDENT STATED IN THE PROCLAMATION. TO GIVE YOU SOME IDEA HOW THESE PARTNERSHIPS HAVE WORKED AND COULD WORK, MAY I SHARE WITH YOU THE ANTICIPATED BENEFITS EXPECTED TO ACCRUE FROM THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THESE NEW PARTNERSHIPS IN EDUCATION AS OUTLINED IN THE PUBLISHED PROCEEDINGS OF THE "NATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS IN EDUCATION PROGRAM" THAT WAS SPONSORED BY THE WHITE HOUSE'S OFFICE OF PRIVATE SECTOR INITIATIVES. THE PROGRAM WAS CONDUCTED LAST OCTOBER 13 TO GENERATE SUPPORT FOR THE PROCLAMATION AND TO PROVIDE GUIDANCE FOR THOSE DESIRING TO RESPOND TO THE PRESIDENT'S LEADERSHIP IN THIS AREA.

ACCORDING TO THE PROCEEDINGS, AMERICA'S SCHOOLS CAN BE ENRICHED THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS WITH BUSINESS AND COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS BECAUSE THESE PARTNERSHIPS WILL PROVIDE THE

OPPORTUNITY FOR SCHOOLS TO: 1) ACQUIRE ASSISTANCE IN MEETING SPECIAL NEEDS BEYOND THE RESOURCES OF THE SCHOOL; 2) SUPPLEMENT LEARNING IN THE CLASS ROOM WITH RELEVANT LEARNING EXPERIENCES IN BUSINESSES AND INDUSTRIES; 3) ATTAIN A REALISTIC PICTURE OF THE BUSINESS WORLD AND THE PREPARATION STUDENTS NEED TO SUCCEED IN IT; 4) BECOME AWARE OF BUSINESS RESOURCES, REQUIREMENTS AND CONCERNS; 5) GAIN EXPERTISE AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE THAT MIGHT PROVIDE A MORE COMPLETE EDUCATION FOR STUDENTS OR MANAGEMENT SKILLS FOR TEACHERS AND ADMINISTRATORS.

IT GOES ON TO DETAIL SOME OF THE POSSIBLE SERVICES THAT THE PRIVATE SECTOR (THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY) COULD PROVIDE OUR NATION'S SCHOOLS: 1) TUTORING ARRANGEMENTS; 2) FIELD TRIPS AND TOURS; 3) CLASSROOM SPEAKERS; 4) INTERNSHIPS AND APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMS FOR STUDENTS; 5) DONATED EQUIPMENT; 6) SUMMER INTERNSHIPS FOR EDUCATORS; AND 7) SCHOLARSHIPS OR SPECIAL GRANTS FOR EXPERIMENTAL PROGRAMS. COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS (PARENT/TEACHER ORGANIZATIONS, FRATERNAL GROUPS, HOSPITALS, FOUNDATIONS ETC.) CAN ESTABLISH VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS, SET UP TUTORIAL PROGRAMS, PRESENT AWARDS FOR ACADEMIC AND ATHLETIC ACHIEVEMENT, MOTIVATE STUDENTS, ATTEND SCHOOL FUNCTIONS AND PROVIDE ROLE MODELS. LET ME GIVE SOME EXAMPLES OF THESE TYPES OF PRIVATE SECTOR/PUBLIC SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS IN EDUCATION THAT ARE ALREADY UNDERWAY:

1. XEROX HAS MADE A GRANT OF 1,000 PERSONAL COMPUTERS TO SCHOOL SYSTEMS IN MAJOR METROPOLITAN AREAS. THE $5 MILLION GRANT WILL BE ADMINISTERED BY THE NATIONAL URBAN LEAGUE.

2. IN SUCH CITIES AS DALLAS, LOS ANGELES, AND MEMPHIS, THE PRIVATE SECTOR, IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE PUBLIC SECTOR AND COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS, HAS INITIATED "ADOPT-A-SCHOOL" PROGRAMS WHEREIN REPRESENTATIVES FROM THESE GROUPS HAVE ENTERED INTO AGREEMENTS TO PROVIDE SPECIFIC SERVICES AND ASSISTANCE TO A SINGLE SCHOOL OR GROUP OF SCHOOLS. SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED RANGE FROM VOLUNTEERS TO DONATIONS OF EQUIPMENT AND/OR CASH.

LEST ONE GET THE IMPRESSION THAT ALL OF THE ACTION AND FOCUS IN BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS HAS BEEN IN URBAN SETTINGS, LET ME CITE AN EXAMPLE THAT INVOLVES A RURAL COMMUNITY. THOSE OF YOU WHO RESIDE IN THIS GREAT STATE OF IOWA, I AM SURE, ARE AWARE OF THIS DEVELOPMENT FOR IT INVOLVES A RURAL COMMUNITY HERE, IN IOWA, FOREST CITY. I HAD THE PRIVILEGE LAST OCTOBER OF REPRESENTING SECRETARY BELL AT CEREMONIES IN FOREST CITY CONDUCTED TO INAUGURATE A MODEL RURAL COMMUNITY EDUCATION PROGRAM THAT IS THE RESULT OF AN ALLIANCE BETWEEN THE PRIVATE SECTOR AND THE FOREST CITY EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM. THE UNPRECEDENTED ONE MILLION DOLLAR HIGH-TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM IS DESIGNED TO BUILD COMPUTER LITERACY AND COMPUTER-BASED EDUCATION INTO THE MAINSTREAM OF FOREST CITY COMMUNITY LIFE. THE PROGRAM WILL ESTABLISH MODEL EDUCATION CENTERS THAT WILL SERVE AS LEARNING LABORATORIES PROVIDING A VARIETY OF COURSES RANGING FROM BASIC SKILLS TO COMPUTER LITERACY. I KNOW THAT THOSE OF YOU HERE WHO RESIDE IN THIS GREAT STATE MUST BE FILLED WITH A SPECIAL SENSE OF PRIDE THAT THIS HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT IS HAPPENING IN YOUR STATE. I KNOW THAT I AM

PROUD THAT DEVELOPMENTS LIKE THIS ARE BEGINNING TO OCCUR NOT ONLY IN FOREST CITY, IOWA, BUT ALSO IN OTHER "FOREST CITY'S" THROUGHOUT OUR NATION. OUR TASK IS TO SEE TO IT THAT IT HAPPENS AT A RATE AND EXTENT GREAT ENOUGH TO ASSURE THAT BY THE TURN OF THIS CENTURY, RURAL AMERICA WILL NO LONGER LAG BEHIND ITS URBAN COUNTERPART IN THE AREAS OF EDUCATION AND ECONOMIC WELL-BEING.

LET ME TURN YOUR ATTENTION, IF I MAY, TO WHAT WE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION ARE DOING TO FURTHER THE INTERESTS OF RURAL EDUCATION. SECTION 206 OF THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION ORGANIZATION ACT, THE LEGISLATION THAT CREATED THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, DIRECTED THE SECRETARY OF EDUCATION WORKING THROUGH THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR VOCATIONAL AND ADULT EDUCATION TO "PROVIDE AN UNIFIED APPROACH TO RURAL EDUCATION AND RURAL FAMILY EDUCATION THROUGH COORDINATION OF PROGRAMS WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT AND TO WORK WITH THE FEDERAL INTERAGENCY COMMITTEE OF EDUCATION (FICE) TO COORDINATE RELATED ACTIVITIES AND PROGRAMS OF OTHER FEDERAL DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES." WITHOUT USING THE TERM, WHAT THE CONGRESS DID IN INCLUDING THIS LANGUAGE IN THE ACT WAS TO DIRECT THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO DEVELOP <u>NEW PARTNERSHIPS IN RURAL EDUCATION</u>, FIRST WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND SECONDLY BETWEEN IT AND OTHER SECTORS OF THE FEDERAL ESTABLISHMENT TO FURTHER THE AIM OF RURAL EDUCATION AND TO PROMOTE EQUITY FOR AND EXCELLENCE IN RURAL EDUCATION. THE MECHANISM THAT I RECOMMENDED TO THE SECRETARY AND ONE THAT HE SUBSEQUENTLY APPROVED WAS THE CREATION OF A DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION INTRA-AGENCY COMMITTEE ON RURAL EDUCATION

AND A RURAL EUCATION SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE FEDERAL INTER-AGENCY ON EDUCATION (FICE). I SERVE AS CHAIR OF BOTH OF THESE COMMITTEES. THE INTRA-AGENCY COMMITTEE IS ACTUALLY A NEW PARTNERSHIP ESTABLISHED WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT ITSELF INVOLVING ALL 14 PRINCIPAL OFFICES. THE FICE SUBCOMMITTE IS A PARTNERSHIP IN RURAL EDUCATION INVOLVING THE DEPARTMENTS OF EDUCATION, AGRICULTURE, INTERIOR AND LABOR.

THE MOST NOTABLE RESULT OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THIS NEW PARTNERSHIP IN RURAL EDUCATION WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT HAS BEEN THE DEVELOPMENT AND ISSUANCE OF THE DEPARTMENT'S NATIONAL RURAL EDUCATION POLICY STATEMENT. THAT STATEMENT WAS PREPARED FOR THE SECRETARY'S SIGNATURE BY THE COMMITTEE. ANOTHER LESS WELL KNOWN ACCOMPLISHMENT OF THE COMMITTEE HAS BEEN THE PREPARATION OF ANNUAL COMPREHENSIVE REPORTS TO THE SECRETARY ON THE DEPARTMENT'S RURAL EDUCATION ACTIVITIES. TWO SUCH REPORTS HAVE BEEN PREPARED SINCE THE COMMITTEE'S CREATION. WE HAVE ALSO REVIEWED EDUCATION LEGISLATION, REGULATIONS AND PROCUREMENT ACTIVITIES OF THE DEPARTMENT TO INSURE EQUITY FOR RURAL EDUCATION AND TO SEE IF THE REGULATORY BURDEN IMPOSED BY THEM ON SMALL AND RURAL EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS COULD NOT BE REDUCED. WE ARE ESTABLISHING LINKAGES, AND PARTNERSHIPS WITH MAJOR ORGANIZATIONS IN RURAL EDUCATION, SUCH AS, PEOPLE UNITED FOR RURAL EDUCATION AND THE RURAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION. WE ARE IN THE PROCESS OF IMPLEMENTING A STRATEGY DESIGNED TO INSURE THAT THE POLICY STATEMENT DOES NOT BECOME JUST WORDS ON PAPER. WE ARE PROVIDING THE LEADERSHIP IN THE DEPARTMENT'S

planning of a national rural education conference scheduled for this coming June. Responding to the leadership initiative of the President in declaring this a year of partnerships in education, we have established as the theme of the Conference, "Building Partnerships for Quality Education in Rural America." Planning the conference itself has involved the establishment of new partnerships in rural education among individuals representing rural educators from local school districts, the Congress, State education agencies, the Departments of Education and Agriculture, colleges and universities, the National School Boards Association, People United for Rural Education, the Rural Education Association, and others.

A major objective of the conference will be to develop strategies to encourage the formulation of partnerships in a national effort to improve the quality of rural education. We will invite the States to send teams of representatives to the Conference who are committed to return to their respective States to work in partnership and to build additional rural partnerships. I hope that many of you here today will attend the Conference as members of those teams or as general participants. The Conference will be the culminating event in the the President's National Year of Partnerships in Education.

I WOULD LIKE TO CLOSE MY PRESENTATION TODAY BY BRIEFLY REVIEWING WITH YOU THE COMMITMENT THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION HAS MADE TO RURAL EDUCATION THROUGH THE ISSUANCE OF THE POLICY STATEMENT.

TO THE EXTENT TO WHICH FUNDS ARE AVAILABLE, THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION WILL: 1) ASSIST EDUCATORS AND ADMINISTRATORS ON ALL LEVELS TO DEVELOP OUTREACH AND VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS WITH THE ACTIVE SUPPORT AND INTERACTION OF PARENTS, TEACHERS, CIVIC GROUPS AND <u>THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY</u>; 2) EXPAND THE DATA BASE ON THE CONDITION OF EDUCATION IN RURAL AREAS, AND PROVIDE THE NECESSARY TECHNOLOGIES TO DISSEMINATE INFORMATION RELEVANT TO CURRICULUM, ORGANIZATION, PERSONNEL, AND SUPPORT SERVICES NEEDED FOR EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS SERVING RURAL COMMUNITTIES; 3) FOCUS ITS MONITORING EFFORTS ON REDUCING COMPLEXITY OF CRITERIA FOR FUNDING, REDUCING COMPLEXITY OF APPLICATION AND REPORTING PROCEDURES AND FORMS, AND REDUCING UNREALISTTIC REQUIREMENTS; 4) ASSIST IN IDENTIFYING AND DEVELOPING SPECIAL PROGRAMS AVAILABLE FOR HANDICAPPED INDIVIDUALS LOCATED IN RURAL ARREAS; CONSOLIDATE THE RESULTS OF AVAILABLE RESEARCH ON SHORTAGES AND ADDITIONAL NEEDS FOR ANALYSIS BY THE SECRETARY'S RURAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE; 5) INCLUDE RURAL INSTITUTIONS IN DEMONSTRATION AND PILOT PROJECTS AND INVOLVE CROSS SECTIONS OF RURAL COMMUNITIES IN EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY PLANNING; 6) PROVIDE CONSULTATIVE AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO RURAL EDUCATIONAL ENTITIES; 7) <u>ASSIST</u>

RURAL EDUCATION IN IMPROVING THE ACHIEVEMENT OF BLACK STUDENTS, AMERICAN INDIAN STUDENTS, CHILDREN OF MIGRANT WORKERS AND OTHER MINORITIES; AND (B) ASSIST INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES LIVING IN RURAL AREAS WITH FAMILY EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND SERVICES THROUGH VOCATIONAL HOME ECONOMICS.

WHEN WE SUBMITTED THE POLICY STATEMENT TO THE SECRETARY FOR HIS APPROVAL, WE ALSO SUBMITTED A PLAN FOR IMPLEMENTING THE POLICY. MEETINGS OF OUR RURAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE WILL INCLUDE A REPORT BY EACH MEMBER ON THE PROGRESS HIS RESPECTIVE OFFICE IS MAKING IN CARRYING OUT ITS PART OF THE PLAN. THE FIRST IN THE SCHEDULED SERIES OF THESE REPORTS WAS MADE AT OUR DECEMBER MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE. IN SEPTEMBER WE WILL SUBMIT A SUMMARY REPORT TO THE SECRETARY ON THE PROGRESS THAT WE MAKE IN IMPLEMENTING THE POLICY DURING THIS FISCAL YEAR.

OUR EFFORTS TO IMPROVE THE DATA BASE ON THE CONDITION OF RURAL EDUCATION WILL NOT INVOLVE INCREASING THE PAPERWORK BURDEN BUT, HOPEFULLY, CAN BE ACCOMPLISHED THROUGH BETTER UTILIZATION OF THE DATA THAT YOU ARE ALREADY PROVIDING TO US. IMPROVEMENT IN THE QUANTITY AND QUALITY OF INFORMATION GENERATED ON RURAL AMERICA WAS ALSO IDENTIFIED, AS A NECESSARY FIRST STEP IN EFFORTS TO IMPROVE THE DELIVERY OF SERVICE TO RURAL COMMUNITIES, IN THE ADMINISTRATION'S RURAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY STATEMENT THAT WAS PRODUCED BY AN ADVISORY GROUP TO THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE. IT WAS MY PRIVILEGE TO SERVE ON THAT ADVISORY GROUP. WE MUST DEVELOP SOLUTIONS

TO UNIQUE RURAL PROBLEMS THAT ARE BASED ON GOOD INTELLIGENCE ON WHAT WILL WORK IN A RURAL ENVIRONMENT.

IT HAS BEEN A PLEASURE TO BE HERE WITH YOU TODAY. I AM ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT WHAT WE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO ACCOMPLISH TOGETHER. I LOOK FORWARD TO FURTHERING THE INTERESTS OF RURAL AMERICA AS WE CONTINUE TO BUILD PARTNERSHIPS FOR IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF RURAL EDUCATION. THANK YOU.